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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
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Conference of African Ministers of Trade
Ninth Session

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 19-20 March 1987

LC/NAIROBI

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN
MINISTERS OF TRADE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The ninth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 19 to 20 March 1987. It was opened by Comrade Wollie Chekol, Member of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Ethiopia and Minister of Finance. Statements were also made by the Executive Secretary of ECA and the Assistant Secretary General of the OAU. The meeting was preceded by a preparatory meeting of Inter-Governmental Group of Experts on Trade which was held in Addis Ababa, from 12-15 March 1987. The representative of the People's Republic of the Congo as Chairman of the Eighth Conference presided over the opening ceremony.

II. ATTENDANCE

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following organizations attended as observers African, Caribbean Pacific Group of States, African Association of Trade Promotion Organizations, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Development Programme, International Trade Centre, Commonwealth Secretariat, Arab League, International Association of State Trading Organizations (ASTRO) and the African Centre for Monetary Studies.

III. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU

4. The meeting elected the following countries to constitute the bureau:

Chairman	-	Sierra Leone
Vice-Chairmen	-	Tunisia Zaire Uganda
Rapporteur	-	Zambia

5. On his assumption of office as Chairman of the meeting, Hon. Joseph Amra Pangali, Minister of Trade and Industry of Sierra Leone, expressed appreciation of the outgoing bureau for the work accomplished since the Eighth Conference. He also expressed thanks for the confidence and honour reposed in his country, Sierra Leone. He therefore pledged that his bureau would work with dedication. He then stressed the importance of the issues before the meeting and observed that the level of participation was in itself proof of the seriousness which the African countries attached to these issues in the context of the promotion of intra-African trade. The excellent work accomplished by the Intergovernmental Group of Experts, the various opening statements were also positive catalyst to fruitful deliberations. There were nevertheless, serious problems and challenges to be faced but these were problems that all African countries would have to confront irrespective of their economic situation.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

6. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening ceremony
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of agenda and programme of work
4. Review of recent trends in Africa's trade relations:
   (a) Contribution of domestic and intra-African trade to Africa's economic growth and development
   (b) Problems of land locked, semi-landlocked and island African countries and prospects for transit trade
   (c) Market research, trade information and trade promotion
   (d) Report on the Fourth and preparation for the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair
   (e) Report on the activities of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO)
   (f) Major developments in Africa's international trade relations;
   (e) The impact of the activities of transnational corporations on Africa's trade.
5. Review of Africa's submission to UNCTAD VII
6. Any other business
7. Date and venue of the tenth session
8. Adoption of the report and closure of the Conference

V. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening ceremony

7. At the opening of the Ninth Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade a message from Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council and Commander in Chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces was delivered by Comrade Wollie Chekol, Member of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia and Minister of Finance.

8. In welcoming the honourable Ministers to Ethiopia, Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam pointed out that the Ninth Session of the Conference was taking place at a momentous time and coincided with the advent of the negotiations of the Group of 77 and the Seventh Session of UNCTAD. Thus, Comrade Mengistu recalled that the current international economic and political situations were inclement to the developmental interests of developing countries. They were characterized by the resurgence of protectionism, the persistent fall in the prices of commodities of interest to Africa, continued decline in the value of the dollar and the general instability of the exchange rates of the major world currencies. It was further pointed out that since in most African countries only two or three commodities generate as much as 90 per cent of their foreign exchange currencies, the issue of commodities remained crucial to Africa's livelihood in all its aspects.

9. The message regretted the fact that commodity agreements including the Common Fund have either failed to work or have not taken off. The situation had been further exacerbated by the rigidities in the agricultural policies of the industrialized countries which have resorted to heavily subsidizing their agricultural sector.

10. As regards the status of financial resource flows and Africa's external indebtedness, the message pointed out that Africa's aggregated debt has already exceeded the level of 200 billion dollars with the result that Africa has become a net contributor rather than a net recipient of external financial resources. In that context, Ministers were urged to direct their efforts towards improving conditions in international trade and financial relations so as to generate the required flow of external finance to boost Africa's trade and development in the fora of UNCTAD, the World Bank, IMF etc.

11. In Africa's economic recovery effort, the message went on to point out that while Africa expected external assistance, Africa should ensure its own economic liberation by seeking to implement the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos which have charted out for Africa a multisectoral approach to its development. In case of the implementation of the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery and the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Economic Recovery and Development on the other hand, the message urged the international community to assist Africa with supplementary resources that Africa needed.

12. Turning to the issue of intra-African co-operation and trade relations the message noted the efforts being made and the progress recorded by the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The contribution made in that direction by the first PTA Trade Fair held in Nairobi in 1986, the Clearing House, the Trade and Development Bank as well as the PTA subregional Federation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry were cited as cases in point.

13. In conclusion, the message renewed to the Ministers the warmest greetings and welcome of the Workers Party, the Government and People of Socialist Ethiopia and wished the Conference every success.

14. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Prof. Adebayo Adedeji, welcomed the delegations to the Conference and thanked Comrade Wollie Chelol, Minister of Finance of Ethiopia, for the most illuminating message delivered on behalf of Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, General Secretary of the Workers Party of Ethiopia, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. He took the opportunity to congratulate Comrade Wollie Chelol for his appointment to the post of Minister of Finance and that he would be missed in the Conference of Ministers of Trade because he was one of the founding fathers. He then recalled that the ninth session of the Conference was taking place against the background of increased uncertainty in the conditions under which international trade was taking place. The critical task facing the Conference therefore was to adopt concrete measures for translating commitments made in both the Lagos Plan of Action and Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery into reality with the view of promoting self-reliance through trade.

15. Turning to issues of Africa's trade, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji stressed several matters of great concern to African countries, in particular, the continuing decline in export earnings which are a result of falling commodities' prices of major interest to the region. He illustrated this situation with the example of sugar from which African countries' earnings in 1985 were only US$547.[illegible] million from volume export of 2.7 million metric tons in 1985 as against US$996.[illegible] million for just 2.3 million metric tons in 1981. It was, therefore, a matter of grave concern that satisfactory solutions should be found to adequately compensate commodity producers for this kind of drastic falls in revenues.

16. Another important aspect of Africa's international trade relations was the slow rate of diversification process, since trade between Africa and non-traditional partners had not made any positive significant change both in terms of commodity composition nor in its overall share of trade values. He therefore called for diversification of production and that the international community should genuinely come to Africa's assistance within the framework of the UN

Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development with a view to accelerating the region's industrialization process.

17. He also drew attention of the meeting to the situation in the area of South-South trade, where the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) had been recognized as an important mechanism in promoting co-operation among developing countries. Dealing of the major preoccupation of African countries in this field, he cited the attitude of some other developing countries to consider Africa as a source of raw materials and a market for their manufactured goods as unacceptable.

18. With regard to domestic and intra-African trade, he praised the establishment of numerous subregional institutions that had been devised to promote trade. He however regretted that their impact had not been significant and the share of intra-African trade in total Africa's exchanges had been actually declining in the recent years. The objective of developing intra African trade requires not only restructuring of production, distribution and marketing but also the implementation of already agreed decisions adopted since the first session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade. It was in the light of the above that intra-African trade should be given priority so that it can contribute to the overall efforts towards economic recovery and growth. The ECA Secretariat therefore proposed to launch a Decade for Domestic and Intra-African Trade 1990-1999 whose main purpose would be to focus on intra-African trade problems and prospects and to channel efforts and resources towards the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action.

19. In conclusion, Prof. Adebayo Adedeji raised the issue of the impact of the activities of transnational corporations (TNCs) on Africa's trade, especially on intra African trade flows. The main course of action in this field would be to adopt appropriate policies so as to increase the positive contribution of TNCs towards promoting African self reliance and self sufficiency. Finally, he reiterated that Africa's survival, to say nothing of its prosperity, in the coming decades would depend on the Africans themselves. He therefore expressed his belief that the meeting would give fresh impetus to current efforts towards Africa's economic recovery and development.

20. Ambassador M. Allouane, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity welcomed participants to the Ninth Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade. On behalf of the Secretary-General of OAU, he expressed the hope that the Conference would adopt workable decisions and recommendations that would help in the development and promotion of intra-African trade. The work of the Ministers over the last few days had focussed on the adoption of a common African position on all the issues to be discussed at UNCTAD VII which had been scheduled for July of 1987. Their discussions had basically focussed on increasing the financial resources accorded on concessional terms to African countries in order to implement Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, seeking an acceptable solution to the external indebtedness

of African countries, increasing the prices of basic commodities and export earnings as well as considering the special situation of African LDCs.

21. On intra-African trade, he underscored the fact that this sector complemented the other economic sectors and that the issues which would be debated at UNCTAD VII would relate to intra-African trade given the role that such trade played in the economic development of Africa. Currently, the volume of intra-African trade was very low. In percentage terms, the volume of such trade appeared to be diminishing in relation to Africa's trade with the outside world. However, it was his view that the volume of intra-African trade would speedily increase in pace with the rate at which the economic integration objectives of African countries were achieved in the key sectors of industry, agriculture, transport and communications.

22. Turning to Africa's participation in negotiations over the generalized system of trade preferences among developing countries, he stated that the African Ministers would have to consider this issue in view of the need for effective African participation in the preparation for those negotiations and in the institution of that system. Such participation need not impede the efforts being made to establish an African common market and to strengthen regional and subregional mechanisms for the economic integration of Africa. What was more, participation in other multilateral negotiations such as GATT, GSTP and UNIDO should enable Africa to secure specific concessions that would contribute to the socio-economic development of the continent through the promotion of intra-African trade and economic co-operation.

23. In conclusion, he invited the African Ministers of Trade to ensure that the activities being conducted in the subregional economic groupings took into account the long-term objectives of establishing an African economic community and an African common market which would form the cornerstone of African unity.

24. Comrade Toaty Souchlaty Alphonse, Minister of Trade and Small and Medium scale Enterprises of the People's Republic of the Congo and outgoing Chairman thanked the Ethiopian Minister of Finance and the People of Ethiopia for the welcome accorded to all the delegations and said that the ninth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Development was being held at a time when the African continent was going through a deep crisis that affected its economic and social structure and threatened its development.

25. To tackle that situation, the governments and peoples of Africa should concentrate their efforts on specific priorities such as those selected in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986 - 1990 and Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery that could lead to self sustaining development.

26. The crisis was also gaining ground in international trade particularly as a result of the collapse in commodity prices and the dependence of African countries on a few primary commodities. He deplored the low volume of intra-African trade which was the result of almost no information on demand and supply, the lack of support from banks for developing the trade sector and the inadequacy of transport and communications infrastructure linking African countries.

27. An appropriate strategy to find suitable solutions to the problems should include those decisions that had already been taken, use studies on supply and demand for identifying obstacles to trade, encourage the free movement of economic operators and adopt appropriate incentives. There was also a need to increase the participation of African countries in the various negotiation machineries in order to adopt common positions. In that regard UNCTAD VII was an excellent opportunity to make known Africa's demands on key issues such as the Common Fund, the Integrated Programme for Commodities, protectionism, the Generalised System of Preferences and compensatory financing.

28. With regard to the Uruguay Round of Multilateral trade negotiations, he stressed that the African countries should endeavour to protect Africa's interest throughout the negotiations among other things by strengthening the role of Chambers of Commerce and by signing trade agreements. In that context, he recalled the efforts undertaken by President Dennis Sassou Nguesso, President of the People's Republic of the Congo and current chairman of the OAU, towards the implementation of recommendations relating to Africa's international trade relations. Although his country's volume of trade with other African countries was very low the Party and State were making considerable efforts to promote external trade by strengthening the role of chambers of commerce and signing trade agreements. In conclusion, his country really appreciated the trust it had enjoyed from African countries throughout its mandate and mentioned the activities undertaken by his country to implement the task entrusted to it.

29. His Excellency Mr. Abderahmane Toure, Minister of Trade of Senegal, expressed on behalf of the Conference, the heartfelt appreciation of all the delegations present to Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam, Secretary-General of the Workers Party of Ethiopia, Chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council and Commander-in Chief of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, to the Party, People and Government of Socialist Ethiopia for the brotherly welcome and the distinctly African hospitality that they had been enjoying since their arrival in Addis Ababa. He went on to state that Addis Ababa was a choice place of reflection to which Africans were now well accustomed. The message that the Conference had received from Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam was rich in lessons which would certainly guide and facilitate the work of the current session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade.

30. In the discussions that followed the presentation of the report of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Trade the State Commissioner for External Trade of the Republic of Zaire said that the ninth session of the Meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade was a useful opportunity to review the current status of intra-African trade and the share of Africa's trade in international trade. Africa's economic situation still gave cause for concern and future prospects were not reassuring because of the unfavourable international economic environment.

31. New avenues should be explored to bring about the integrated development of Africa through the integration of African economies and the promotion of trade between African countries. Zaire was committed to supporting all initiatives that fitted in with the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action and traditionally Zaire welcomed international co-operation and regional economic integration. With a view to contributing to the promotion of trade, his country would host the next OAU All-Africa Trade Fair in July 1988 in Kinshassa in October-November 1988. Zaire would also host the first ever trade fair of the Economic Community of Central African States.

32. The various mechanisms established to improve Africa's external trade were inoperative. The most appropriate framework would be a global system of trade preferences among developing countries for which negotiations were ongoing. There was also a need to intensify intra African trade through the promotion of economic integration and the elimination of the various barriers that hampered the free movement of goods and persons within the viable economic groupings.

Review of recent trends in Africa's Trade relations (Agenda item 4)

Contribution of domestic and intra-African trade to Africa's economic growth and development (Agenda item 4 (i))

33. The Chairman of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Trade introduced the report of the Group's meeting held from 12 to 14 March 1987 (E/ECA/CAU/TRADE/71). The Conference used that report as the basis for its discussions.

34. A number of delegations found the documentation to be relevant, thought-provoking and action-oriented. The meeting reiterated the fundamental importance of domestic trade. One delegation observed, however, that the document had not put enough emphasis on the lack of domestic savings which was one of the impediments to the development of domestic trade.

35. The Chairman of the Conference expressed the concern of the intergovernmental group of experts on problems of non-implementation of previous decisions and appealed to the ministers to take up this matter with their governments. During the discussion that followed, the ministers reiterated the need for African countries to redouble their efforts to implement the decisions taken by the

the Conference to promote intra African Trade. To this end, they stressed the need for political commitment to encourage intra-African Trade. In addition a number of other obstacles to intra-African Trade were identified which included the lack of supporting service industries to trade, diversification of production, confidence in African products and shortages of trained people in trade and trade promotion. The lack of harmonization of customs and other procedures, the problems of convertibility of African currencies, as well as a general lack of trade information were also highlighted among the critical problems facing the promotion of intra African trade. Many other delegations stated that the reasons behind the stagnation of intra-African trade and obstacles to its expansion included the small size of national markets, the fact that industrial production policies were not harmonized, inadequate communications channels, control of distribution channels by foreign companies, external payments arrangements and the lack of political will.

36. It was suggested during the discussion that the secretariat should in future sessions present a report on the trade between members of subregional integration groupings, and that a follow up mechanism should be established to ensure the implementation of the decisions of the Conference.

37. A majority of delegations felt that while the idea of the Decade was appealing, instead of proclaiming 1990-1999 as the United Nations Decade for Domestic and Intra-African Trade, it would be more appropriate to try and implement the decisions that had already been taken by African Heads of State and Government with respect to the development of domestic and intra-African trade. The meeting felt that the United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa and the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa could help to solve some of the problems of domestic and intra African trade.

38. The Conference reiterated the following decisions taken at its eighth session held in Brazzaville, Congo in October 1985:

(c) Domestic Trade

(i) a full study should be undertaken in each country to determine the food requirements of the population in all areas, in particular the different food grain requirements to form the basis for domestic trade. If necessary such a study should indicate ways of introducing new staple grains in areas of chronic shortages;

(ii) institute, with the collaboration of co-operative societies and commercial banks, more effective systems for providing credit to small holders and medium scale farmers and to small entrepreneurs involved in the production and marketing of simple goods including handicrafts. There must also be guaranteed prices for agricultural produce;

(iii) new programme should be implemented to ensure adequate supplies of raw materials and inputs specifically for the production for domestic markets and the introduction of pricing policy with incentives to encourage farmers to increase their production and to become more integrated within the money sector of the economy.

(iv) establish proper trade distribution networks throughout the country as well as a system of buffer stock both in order to maintain steady price levels and to ensure adequate and even supplies during periods of high and low production. Such measures should include the establishment of physical plants and the development of transport facilities over long distances for goods and persons between the urban and rural areas through public investment or assistance to the private sector.

(b) Intra-African Trade

(i) That intra-African trade be increased to the tune of 10% of the world total trade by the end of 1985.

(ii) That increased efforts be made to progressively reduce and eventually remove trade and customs barriers to intra-African trade especially those affecting cash crops specifically those mentioned in the Lagos Plan of Action by the end of 1985.

(iii) That efforts be renewed to support and strengthen subregional institutions for trade promotion called for in the Lagos Plan of Action.

(iv) That significant improvements be made in intra-African trade information and marketing systems and systematically monitoring and evaluating trade performance by African countries.

(v) That all African countries should commit themselves and encourage the free movement of African traders and economic operators for the purpose of promoting intra-African trade. Furthermore, that prompt action be undertaken to increase and regularize border trade where necessary by creating border free trade zones within which traditional operators may continue to function.

(vi) That where circumstances permit, priority be given to African tenders for the provision of goods and services offered by or originating from other African countries.

(vii) That use of African airlines and shipping lines be increased for freight services and transportation of goods for intra-African trade.

(viii) That appropriate pricing policies and other incentives designed to encourage domestic and intra-African trade be encouraged, especially in food and food products.

(ix) That steps be taken to link trade development with progress in other sectors such as industry, agriculture, education and training, transport and communication as outlined in paragraph 76 of the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 adopted by the 21st Summit of OAU.

(x) That prompt action be taken to develop adequate storage and distribution facilities for intra-African trade.

(xi) Called upon the Ministers of Transport and Communications to give priority to the creation or rehabilitation of inter country roads and rail links likely to encourage the growth of intra-African trade with particular emphasis on feeder and access roads permitting for easier transportation of rural produce to the market.

(xii) Request ministries of industry, science and technology and energy to adopt appropriate policies and priority towards growth in intra-African trade in order to promote the structural adjustments needed in the region for development.

39. In addition, the Conference adopted the following decisions:

(a) African countries and subregional and regional institutions should implement the decisions on domestic and intra-African trade in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery adopted by African Heads of State and Government.

(b) African Governments should launch campaigns to encourage the consumption of local products.

(c) African Governments should harmonize their industrial promotion policies in order to increase the prospects for trade with each other.

(d) African Governments should study the means to enable them to put an end to extroverted banking systems.

(e) Request the secretariats of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Organization of African Unity and subregional institutions including clearing houses and the African Centre for Monetary Studies to carry out specific studies on such topics as barter trade, the problems of small markets and the harmonization of industrial production policies in order to formulate specific proposals to make the established subregional economic communities more operational.

(f) That developed donor agencies be urged to accord appreciable priority to regional and subregional groupings in providing increased financial/development resources under regional programming facilities to support activities such as infrastructural and industrial development, trade in goods of local/regional origin which will enhance intra-African trade. For the effective implementation of such a policy, donor agencies should adopt a flexible and positive attitude in formulating criteria that will facilitate the rapid development of those factors necessary for accelerating intra-African trade.

(g) Urge member countries of regional and subregional groupings to give sustained maximum financial support to such groupings and to accord them the requisite political will that will ensure the rapid realisation of the goals and objectives of these groupings.

(h) That ECA secretariat should publish all resolutions and decisions taken by the Conference of African Ministers of Trade to promote domestic and intra-African trade.

(i) African Governments should reinforce their co-operation with the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT which in 1973 was designated as the focal point in the UN system for technical co-operation in trade promotion. ITC's technical co-operation programmes at the national, subregional and interregional levels cover, inter-alia, institutional infrastructure for trade promotion, product and market development including supply and demand surveys and related trade expansion follow-up activities; national trade information services, subregional trade information networks and telexed market news services; specialized advisory services in export packaging, quality control and standardization, costing and pricing, national commercial representation abroad, export finance services, trade fairs and commercial publicity; chambers of commerce, commodity promotion as per UNCTAD resolution 158(VI); human resources development; import operations and techniques; special programme for LDC's, women entrepreneurs; etc.

(j) African countries should develop and implement vocational training programmes in the area of trade with a view to informing and improving skills of the African traders in the informal sector.

(k) Donor countries and organizations should be urged to provide resources for the implementation of the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for African programmes in support of intra-African trade.

(l) member countries are urged to establish commercial banks and other trade supporting industries on each others' territories and to allocate increased financial resources to the trade sector.

Problems of African land-locked, Semi-land locked and Island countries and prospects for their improved transit trade (Agenda item 4(ii))

40. On the above-stated agenda item the Ministers considered the relevant part of the report of the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Trade, ref. doc. E/ECA/OAU/TRADE/71. The Conference felt that the problems of those countries needed such urgent solution that the OAU secretariat should redouble its efforts to complete the study which they had initiated. The said study, it was recommended should be as comprehensive as possible. The ECA secretariat was called upon to follow closely the activities of the Indian Ocean Islands Commission.

41. In the lively debate that followed the presentation, the Conference was happy to note with appreciation the initiative taken by the OAU Secretariat in tabling such an important subject for the consideration of the Conference. It acknowledged that the paper was essentially a preliminary one with a lot of gaps to be filled. The Conference therefore asked the secretariat to re-double its efforts to carry out a comprehensive study on the subject with a view to proposing very imaginative solutions to the concrete problems facing not only land-locked countries but also the island and the coastal States as well as their inter-State relationships. The Conference adopted the following decisions:

(a) The OAU Secretariat in collaboration with the ECA, UNCTAD, the sub regional and regional economic groupings in Africa should endeavour to carry out the said studies so as to address the concrete problems in all aspects.

(b) The question of the problems of African land-locked, semi-land-locked, coastal and island countries and the prospects for their improved transit trade should further be studied and a report submitted to the 10th Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade, to be preceded by the inter-governmental group of experts.

(c) The study should include:

(i) a thorough assessment of existing transport corridors and propose measures to strengthen the corridors;

(ii) a comprehensive examination of transit trade in Africa and propose policy measures which would facilitate this type of trade;

(iii) propose measures for improvement of transit relation-ships between the coastal and land-locked countries on the one hand, and between coastal and island countries as well as land-locked and transit land-locked and semi-land-locked countries on the other, and relations between land-locked countries themselves.

(iv) strengthening of co-operation at bilateral and multilateral/subregional levels, and between the transit and land-locked countries and the coastal and island countries as well as semi-land-locked countries;

(v) concrete measures to develop and expand inter-island trade;

(vi) assessment of transit regulations.

(d) urge all African countries which have not yet done so, to sign and/or ratify the Convention on Transit Trade of Land Locked countries.

Market Research, trade information and trade promotion (Agenda item 4(iii))

42. Under this item the Conference considered some of the recent developments in the area of market research and trade promotion and the efforts made by some African countries as well as those taken by ECA to implement the decisions of its 8th session. There were however several problems in these areas which needed to be addressed, including those relating to institution building. A number of constructive proposals were made for alleviating the problems highlighted, such as the promotion of joint ventures undertakings by African countries and export credit financing and insurance schemes.

43. The Conference reiterated the need for African countries to honour commitments and extend continued support to subregional and regional trade promotion institutions in order to avoid a financial crisis such as is threatening the very existence of AATPO and the newly established Federation of African Chambers of Commerce.

44. The Report of the First Regional Symposium on African State Trading Organizations (STOs)(E/ECA/TRADE/68) which was held in Addis Ababa from 4 to 6 March 1987 was circulated to the Conference. In this regard, the beneficial role of the 200 African parastatal organizations or STOs involved in international trade and in promoting intra-African trade was highlighted and those STOs which were not yet members of ASTRO were urged to become members.

45. A representative of ITC stated that trade was given low priority in some development plans which, coupled with the lack of co-ordinated approach for trade in some cases had made the task of international organizations more difficult in their effort at finding solutions to the pertinent problems. ITC outlined its activities initiated within the PTA and the Indian Ocean Islands Commission on supply and demand surveys and hoped to repeat such initiatives for other African subregions.

46. The Conference adopted the following decisions which include those adopted at its eighth session:

(a) Implementation of the following tasks: (i) the accelerated construction of intraverted transport and communications networks linking African countries; (ii) the establishment and/or strengthening of transit arrangements backed by credible multinational guarantees; (iii) the promotion of long term purchasing and counter purchasing arrangements including multinational marketing enterprises which would generate new intraverted distribution networks; (iv) the creation of trade financing mechanisms including export credit facilities, integrated intra African oriented networks of commercial banks and the proposed African Monetary Fund to assist in the harmonization of monetary policies and payments; (v) the establishment of subregional common markets and regional common market.

(b) New types of intra African trade oriented distribution networks based on national private and public enterprises should be promoted.

(c) Production and trade be linked within national development plans using a macro marketing approach. Marketing-oriented planning techniques should be included in curriculae of national and subregional management and trade promotion institutes.

(d) National, subregional and regional trade promotion institutes should be reinforced and given necessary resources in order to function properly. Trade promotion funds should be established.

(e) African governments should extend their full support to the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO) and the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce. Fund raising actions should be undertaken to support market research and supply and demand studies.

(f) Member States should strengthen their co operation in exchange of trade information through subregional and regional trade information systems co ordinated by ECA with ITC's technical back-stopping.

(g) Secretariats of OAU and OAU devise means of rationalizing the activities of AATPO, the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce and ECA's Africa Trade Centre in order to avoid duplication and waste of resources.

Report on the Fourth All Africa Trade Fair and Preparations for the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair (Agenda item 4(iv))

47. The Ministers considered the agenda item 4(iv) dealing with the above subject in the light of the recommendations transmitted by the meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Trade contained in Document E/ECA/CAU TRADE/71.

40. After a few amendments to the text, the Ministers adopted the following decisions and the attached resolutions:

(a) That a special message of congratulations and thanks should be addressed to the President of the Republic of Togo, General Gnassingbe Eyadema to the Government and people of Togo for the exceptional efforts they deployed to make the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair a success.

(b) That while taking note of the report and appreciating the successful outcome of the Fourth All Africa Trade Fair and bearing in mind that such an instrument must be functionally used to create the desired impact on intra African trade expansion, the OAU secretariat in collaboration with ECA, ITC and all relevant intergovernmental organizations, especially ECOWAS, PTA, SADCC, IOCAS and the Indian Ocean Islands Commission should conduct a thorough assessment of the impact of the previous All-Africa Trade Fairs.

(c) That the Conference takes note of the information provided by the delegation of Zaire, concerning the proposed date for the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair as 16 to 31 July 1988 in that connection enjoined all member States to refrain from organizing national trade fairs to coincide with the date announced and invite member States to take into account these dates when organizing their national trade fairs.

(d) That, interested international organizations such as ITC, the Regional Fund of the ACP-EEC Lome Convention, UNDP, UNCTAD etc. should be urged to provide financial assistance and technical support in order to make the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair a success.

(e) That "Promotion of Intra-African Trade: A Factor for the Integration of African Economies" be the theme for the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair.

(f) Took note of the subvention of US$500,000 granted by the Council of Ministers of the OAU in order to assist in subsidizing certain aspects of the organization of the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair.

(g) That in order to provide the desired impact the OAU secretariat in collaboration with ITC and other relevant agencies undertake a market survey prior to the Fifth Fair and carry out a technical assessment of the impact of that Fair with a view to publish a directory of firms and their commodities which would have feature in the Kinshasa Fair.

(h) That the composition of the Organizing Committee for the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair is as follows:

Western Region: Togo (former host), Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana.

Northern Region: Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia

Eastern Region: Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania

Central Region: Zaire (Chairman), Cameroon and Congo

Southern Region: Angola, Botswana and Zimbabwe

(i) That the terms of reference of the Organizing Committee is as follows:

(i) To meet as regularly as necessary to ensure a successful preparation for and organization of the Fair

(ii) To prepare a budget and programme activities of Fair including publicity, market survey and trade promotion

(iii) To organize symposia and cultural activities

(iv) In collaboration with the host government deal with all administrative arrangements and give all other technical advice in preparation for and during the Fair

(v) In collaboration with the host government deal with issues pertaining to the allocation of space on Fair grounds, including charges for space

(vi) To make recommendation to host Government on all facilitation procedures for exhibitors in respect of visas, customs formalities, air freight, hotel tariffs, transport, hospitality, etc.

(vii) To monitor the disbursement of subvention that is made available by the OAU Council of Ministers to the Fair

(viii) In conjunction with the OAU secretariat review the outcome of the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair with a view to make substantial assessment and concrete suggestions aimed at creating the desired impact on intra African trade to the Tenth Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade.

Report on the activities of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO) (Agenda Item 4(v))

49. The item was introduced by a representative of AATPO who underlined the seriousness of the financial crisis facing the Association. He referred to hardships being experienced by the Association's staff because they had not been paid their salaries and wages for eleven months. Thanking the host Government, ECA and OAU for the material and other support which they had given the Association, he said that AATPO's difficulties were due to non-payment of assessed contributions by the member States, and the fact that AATPO's policy making organs were not invested with political capability commensurate with the Association's assignments and responsibility. He stressed that the European Economic Community was ready to provide a sum of US$1.0 million to support its activities provided that the member States of AATPO demonstrated their support to the secretariat.

50. In the debate that followed sympathy for the Association was expressed by most delegates who spoke although it was also regretted that the matter could not be discussed fully because of non availability of some of the relevant documents especially the Constitution of the Association in all the working languages with proposed amendments. In particular the non availability of the document in Arabic constituted a serious difficulty for the Arab-speaking delegations who could not therefore participate in the discussion of the item. While it was recognized that AATPO had a useful role to play in the development of African trade many delegations stated that the impact of this organization had not been felt in their countries. They also regretted that the studies requested by the Eighth Conference of African Ministers of Trade held in Brazzaville on the rationalization of the activities of AATPO, the Federation of African Chamber of Commerce and the Africa Trade Centre had not been carried out by the Secretariats. They urged that the tendency to set up several institutions with duplicative functions should be discouraged especially in view of the serious financial difficulties that often fetched these institutions. One delegation however observed that its country had been listed among those States which had yet to pay their countributions. Strictly speaking, Rwanda was not yet a member of AATPO because its legislative organs had not ratified the founding document of the Association.

51. Another important issue raised by some delegates related to possible duplication of work between AATPO and the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce. They wondered if the work of AATPO would duplicate the work being done by other institutions or the ECA Africa Trade Centre in the field of trade.

52. A representative of ECA assured the meeting that ECA had taken measures to avoid duplication of the work done and services rendered by the Commission, AATPO, the Federation of African Chambers of Commerce and the African Trade Centre. He informed the meeting that co-operation between ECA and AATPO was indeed being intensified and the co-operation would be ensured through joint programming and project execution, joint missions and through subcontracting by ECA to AATPO to undertake work on behalf of ECA. He expressed ECA's support for the measures which AATPO had proposed for solving its current problems and strengthening it. The ECA representative concluded by reiterating that AATPO had an important role to play in Africa's efforts towards trade promotion, marketing research and trade information. He assured the meeting of ECA's full support to the work of AATPO. He appealed to the meeting to take concrete decisions to resuscitate AATPO.

53. ECA's assurances were echoed by the representative of OAU, who informed the meeting that the organization intended to make more intensive use of the Association's services, since the latter was in effect the OAU's specialized agency in the field of trade development.

54. That the Joint Secretariat of the ECA/OAU, in compliance with the 8th Conference of African Ministers of Trade held in Brazzaville in October 1985, should carry out the requested studies with the view of rationalizing the activities of AATPO, African Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Africa Trade Centre.

55. In his closing summary, the Chairman expressed the consensus which had emerged, that AATPO had a useful role to play in the development of Africa's trade, and that it should be supported and strengthened. The meeting appealed to the member States that had not done so to pay the arrears of their contributions.

Africa's International Trade Relations (Agenda item 4(vi))

56. Under this agenda item, the Conference noted the critical issues of major concern in Africa's international trade relations since the UNCTAD VI Conference in 1983. These included prices of major commodities of interest to Africa which remained low since 1980, low export earnings due to the low prices and the fall in the value of United States dollars, and protectionist policies of the Western countries. Furthermore, the ACP member States had experienced difficulties in taking full advantage of the provisions of the ACP-EEC Lome III Convention compared with other non-ACP newly industrialized countries.

57. The Conference specifically stressed the generally disappointing performance of Africa's external trade relations. In respect to trade with other developing countries, the Conference stressed that GSTP should be geared not only towards trade promotion but trade creation as well. On the trends of Africa's international trade relations, it stressed the general poor

performance of external trade due to the impact of protectionism slow growth rate of trade between Africa and non-traditional partners, declining ODA and private investments. The Conference reaffirmed the measures which it had adopted at its Eighth Session which should be implemented by member countries. These included, inter alia, halting and reversing protectionist policies and removal of distortions in trade preservation of the basic principles and objectives of GATT, and the intensification of measures to improve Africa's trade relations within the context of the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery.

60. The Conference took note of activities relating to trade promotion between Africa and Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe. In particular it took note of the seminars/study tours for African officials in 1985/86 on a national regional and interregional basis being organized jointly by UNCTAD and ECA. These activities were financed out of the UNDP/USSR Trust Fund and by a financial contribution made by the other socialist countries.

59. In regard to the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP) the Conference noted that so far 64 member States of the G-77 have decided to participate in the negotiations with 27 African States in the First Phase. It urged other African States to take the necessary steps to join the GSTP. In particular it urged the least developed African States to do so since they were not expected to reciprocate any concessions accorded to them during the negotiations.

60. In the discussions that followed, the Conference expressed its appreciations of the document before it and the manner in which the pertinent issues had been raised. There was general agreement that the unfavourable international trade environment was detrimental to Africa's development prospects and that there was a need for some flexibility in the policies of industrialized countries towards Africa in the field of trade.

61. Some delegations sought clarifications on the present situation regarding the Common Fund and felt that its early implementation would assist Africa in its development efforts. The Conference urged African countries that had not yet done so, to sign and/or ratify the Agreement on the Common Fund, in order to make it operational without any further delay.

62. With regard to Africa's trade with Socialist countries of Eastern Europe, the Conference felt that such trade was important as a means of diversifying trade channels. Consequently, measures should be intensified to increase such trade. To this end the Conference emphasized that the ECA paper should have elaborated in detail, all issues pertaining to trade with Socialist countries. Lack of information on trade opportunities with the Socialist countries was cited as one of the major factors inhibiting trade promotion with the Socialist countries. Steps taken in some countries to inform on that situation were mentioned. The need to implement the recommendations of the Eighth Conference of African Ministers of Trade addressed to UNCTAD/ECA/OAU Secretariats was stressed, so as to assist member States to penetrate markets of the Socialist countries.

63. Concern was also expressed about the poor participation of African countries in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations and in the Global System of Trade Preferences (GSTP). The Conference recommended that the OAU/ECA Secretariat should, after due consultations with OAU Member States, convene special meetings to articulate and adopt an African position on the important trade issues which form the basis for the on-going Multilateral Trade Negotiations within the framework of GATT. In this connection, the Conference called upon the OAU secretariat to speed up steps being taken to secure observer status within GATT.

64. The Conference took note of the information provided by the GATT representative regarding the background to the launching of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (the Uruguay Round), the objectives of the negotiations as well as measures being proposed to facilitate and strengthen the participation of the developing countries in the negotiations, such as technical assistance and a seminar on the themes of the Uruguay Round and on techniques of negotiations scheduled to take place in Dakar (Senegal) next April.

65. In conclusion, the Conference decided that UNCTAD, UNDP, ECA and OAU should continue to assist African countries in the promotion and the strengthening of their trade relations with the Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe and to further assist them in their negotiations with respect to the MTN and GSTP.

Impact of Transnational Corporations on Domestic and Intra-African Trade (Agenda item 4(vii))

66. The Conference considered this agenda item which was dealt with in Chapter IV of document E/ECA/TRADE/83 entitled «The Impact of Transnational Corporations on Domestic and Intra-African Trade». Transnationals continue to have a widespread control over domestic and intra-African trade but in a rather negative manner. Moreover, transnationals have considerable influence on trade related sectors in the African economies, especially with regard to the means of production, the transfer of technology, the marketing and distribution of products, trade balance and balance of payments equilibrium of African countries.

67. The Conference recommended a number of concrete measures which could be initiated by African countries: to try and maximize benefits from transnationals; to start a new dialogue with transnationals at the national, subregional and regional levels with a view to identifying areas in which transnationals could integrate their activities into the development process of African countries.

68. The conference noted that it was the responsibility of each African government to initiate the required appropriate action. Similarly, to determine and indicate priority areas and sectors where transnationals could

operate or where they could invest. A certain number of delegations also pointed out that it was unrealistic to think that transnationals were guided in their actions by philanthropic considerations. The meeting acknowledged that it would equally be unrealistic to expect transnationals to co-operate fully with the host countries if they were forced to invest in areas or sectors in which they had little or no interest since their investment is often determined by the returns or profits which they repatriate to their parent companies.

69. The Conference emphasized the fact that in spite of the above, African countries should find a solution to the problems created by the TNCs. It was agreed that it was the responsibility of each individual country to take the required necessary action in the light of the peculiarities of each case. It is with this background in mind that a number of delegations suggested that affected countries should also plan and establish integrated projects in order to alleviate some of the adverse effects created by the TNCs; establish efficient tender mechanisms allowing for competitiveness of African tenders; undertake feasibility studies for African joint trade and transport enterprises aimed at replacing the work that is done in these areas by transnationals.

70. The Conference noted that the set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices adopted by the General Assembly in 1980 was not a binding instrument. For that reason developing countries sought at the February 1987 meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Restrictive Business Practices to establish a special committee to monitor observance of obligations on TNCs under the code. This proposal was rejected by a group of industrialized countries. This group also insisted on their prior approval of the outlines of studies by the UNCTAD secretariat. This was not acceptable because it was contrary to normal practice. However, the UNCTAD secretariat would continue to explore ways of making progress in this area.

71. The Conference also recalled some of the rules/controls relating to the Code of Conduct which is being negotiated in the United Nations forum and noted that some TNCs were trying to delay the adoption of the Code of Conduct. The Ministers reiterated the paramount importance of the Code to developing countries in general and to African countries in particular. The Eighth Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade had already recommended that African countries should actively participate in the elaboration of the Code and ensure its implementation.

72. The Conference emphasized the need for TNCs to respect the regulations of the host African governments. In fact, many of these regulations could be incorporated into the envisaged Code of Conduct currently under drafting. The big question was to know if the Code's application would be obligatory or voluntary. Case studies of alternative solutions to TNCs were being presented to the next session. As far as TNCs' role in South Africa and Namibia was concerned the Conference noted that this question had been discussed in several publications and in a number of forums under the auspices of the United Nations and at the United Nations Headquarters in New York by the Center on TNC's. Such publications ought to be put at the disposal of delegations at their request.

73. The Conference adopted the following action intended to enhance the contribution of TNCs towards domestic and intra-African trade:

(a) That TNCs be asked to desist from adopting restrictive business practices against indigenous enterprises including the denial of export credit financing and export credit insurance to African traders who are genuinely struggling to promote domestic and intra-African trade.

(b) That TNCs should be asked to channel part of their resources towards providing financial resources to the development of the rural areas and specifically for agricultural processing including food, water resource development, transport and communications, health and social infrastructure. Since the rural population forms the backbone of the economies of the African countries a balanced growth and development between urban and rural areas would enhance the purchasing power of the rural populations. Hence their demand for manufactured goods will increase to the benefit of TNCs. Furthermore, the present economic structure indicates the existence of growth points in the form of small urban centres within the rural areas which reinforce domestic and intra-African trade especially in border areas. These growth centres do promote overall growth of the economies and thereby enhance the demand for more sophisticated goods generally produced by TNCs.

(c) That TNCs should assist the host countries in which they operate in their efforts to attain self sufficiency in food production especially at the subregional level. To this end, they should assist in efforts to develop the technical and managerial know how and skilled manpower to improve production, storage, distribution and marketing so as to reduce its costs in order to fully exploit the African market. Joint ventures and other production sharing multilateral arrangements for intra-African trade would remove the excess capacity in many African enterprises while improving the quality and unit cost. It must also be emphasized here that the TNCs trade structures set up within the existing African economic groupings will eventually level-off in terms of growth unless industrial production, as well as distribution systems, can be directly linked with domestic and intra-African trade.

(d) That TNCs should be persuaded, where possible, to share advanced statistical information and market intelligence, trade promotion and market analysis techniques with their trade partners in the host countries (both state trading and private indigenous enterprises). To this end, they should assist African countries to develop informative and computerized trans-border data flows systems in order to monitor and record intra-African trade transactions.

Review of Africa's submission to UNCTAD VII (Agenda item 5)

74. The Conference decided that since all delegations had participated in the preparation of Africa's submission to UNCTAD VII, in the recently concluded Ministerial Meeting Preparatory to UNCTAD VII, it would not be necessary to reopen discussion on the agenda item.

Any other business (Agenda item 6)

75. There was no debate under this agenda item.

Date and venue of the tenth session (Agenda item 7)

76. The Conference recalled since its meetings take place every two years, the next meeting would be held in 1989. In view of the need to submit the report to the ECA Conference of Ministers which is always held in April, it was decided to hold the tenth session in March 1989 at a date to be agreed between the Joint secretariat and the Chairman.

Adoption of the report and closure the Conference (Agenda item 8)

77. At the end of its deliberations, the Conference adopted this report.

78. In his closing statement, the chairman recalled the tremendous work accomplished by the Conference. He highlighted some of the progress made by a number of African countries in spite of the many hurdles which had to be overcome. He went on to state that it was gratifying that progress had been made towards strengthening national institutions for promoting domestic trade in the wake of the Lagos Plan of Action. He also reminded the Conference that desired changes could not be made without clearing many of the bottlenecks impeding Africa's ardent desire to move forward the frontiers of intra-African trade.

79. He concluded by suggesting to the Conference the need to cultivate and sustain the right political will at national level, preparedness to implement decisions of properly constituted and competent authorities, the adoption of appropriate package policies and supporting measures designed and harmonized fiscal and monetary policies with a view to bringing about symmetry and flexibility in policy breadth. Such actions he stated, would enhance meaningful, effective, energetic and lasting changes given the support of the OAU and ECA which are sensitive organs responsible for the cross-fertilization of knowledge, information and ideas in enhancing the emancipation of Africa's trade.

1. RESOLUTION ON THE FOURTH ALL AFRICA TRADE FAIR AND PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIFTH ALL AFRICA TRADE FAIR

The Conference of African Ministers of Trade

Bearing in mind the previous OAU Council of Ministers resolutions since 1977 especially its CM/Res. 277("I") institutionalising the All Africa Trade Fairs and the decision of the Second Extra Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in April 1980 contained in the Lagos Plan of Action to inter alia launch a permanent "Buy African Goods" campaign within the framework of the All Africa Trade Fair

Recalling the decision of the third meeting of the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the Whole on Trade and Finance held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 9 to 14 May 1984 to accept the offer of the Republic of Togo to host the Fourth All-Africa Trade Fair

Having taken note with deep appreciation, of the part one of the report of the OAU Secretariat on the Fourth All Africa Trade Fair which took place in Lome, Togo from 10 November to 9 December 1985

Recognizing the special attention demonstrated and contribution made by the President of the Republic of Togo, H.E. General Gnassingbe Eyadema in enabling a successful outcome of the Fourth All Africa Trade Fair

Further recognizing the functional role that the All-Africa Fair could play in developing intra African trade, judging from the results of the Lome Fair in terms of the level of participation, the structure and wide range of goods and the production capacity and potential exhibited

Further recalling its decision adopted in Brazzaville, the Congo in October 1985 during the eighth session of its meeting to accept the offer of Zaire to host the fifth All Africa Trade Fair, the Conference of African Ministers of Trade,

PART I: FOURTH ALL AFRICA TRADE FAIR

1. Requests the Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity to transmit, on behalf of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade a special message of congratulations and thanks to the President of the Republic of Togo, H.E. General Gnassingbe Eyadema, the Government and people of Togo for the exceptional efforts deployed to make the Fourth All Africa Trade Fair a success

2. Directs the Secretary General of the OAU, in collaboration with the ECA, ITC and all relevant intergovernmental organizations, especially PTA, SADCC, ECCAS and the Indian Ocean Islands Commission, to conduct a thorough assessment of the impact of all the previous All-Africa Trade Fairs and to report to the next Conference of African Ministers of Trade.

PART II: FIFTH ALL AFRICA TRADE FAIR

1. Takes note of the preparatory activities so far undertaken by all concerned

2. Notes and approves the 16-31 July 1988 as the date of the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair

3. Urges all member States to refrain from organizing national trade fairs on dates which coincide with the date announced for the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair

4. Urges donors to provide financial assistance to collaborating agencies, such as ITC, the Regional Fund of the ACP-EEC of the Lome Convention UNDP UNCTAD, etc. in order to enable them lend financial assistance and technical support to make the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair a success

5. Endorses the choice of «Promotion of Intra African Trade: A factor for the integration of African Economies» as the theme for the Fifth Fair

6. Takes note with deep appreciation of the subvention of US$500,000 granted to the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity

7. Directs the OAU Secretariat, in collaboration with the ECA and other relevant agencies, to undertake a market survey prior to the Fifth Fair and carry out a technical assessment of the impact of the Fair;

8. Approves the composition of the Organizing Committee of the Fifth All-Africa Trade Fair as follows: Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zaire (Chairman), Cameroon, Congo, Angola, Botswana and Zimbabwe;

9. Further approves the terms of reference of the Organizing Committee of the Fifth All Africa Trade Fair as contained in the report of the Ninth Conference of the Ministers of Trade.

2. PROMOTION OF AFRICA'S TRADE WITH SOCIALIST COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE

The Conference of African Ministers of Trade

Considering the necessity for promoting and diversifying Africa's external trade with non-traditional partners in particular with the Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe requires intensive and continuous efforts including through the multilateral organizations

Noting with satisfaction that ECA and UNCTAD had already initiated activities in this field in conformity with the various decisions of the Trade and Development Board as well as of the eighth session of Conference of African Ministers of Trade

Considering the need of African countries in this field

1. Requests OAU, ECA, UNCTAD and Socialist countries of Eastern Europe to intensify their technical assistance activities in this area and consequently requests UNDP and the Socialist Countries of Eastern Europe to allocate necessary resources to these organizations in order to fully implement their programme of training, dissemination of information and advisory services on a regional, interregional and national basis.

2. Further requests the Secretary-General of OAU, the Executive Secretary of ECA and Secretary-General of UNCTAD to report on this subject at the 10th session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade.

3. RESOLUTION ON THE ASSOCIATION OF AFRICAN TRADE PROMOTION ORGANIZATIONS(AATPO)

The Conference of African Ministers of Trade

Having examined the report on the critical financial and administrative situation of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO)

Recalling that the Lagos Plan of Action assigns to AATPO an important role in the development of intra-African trade

Being cognizant of AATPO's potential to discharge its responsibilities provided it is furnished with the necessary wherewithal

Noting however, that the Association has not been availed the necessary resources to the extent required by its responsibilities and commitments and in particular that many of the Association's members are in arrears with their contributions to the Association's budget, and that this threatens the very existence of the Association

1. Urges the States members of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO) to pay to the Association their current assessed as well as arrears of their assessed contributions to the Association

2. Appeals to all OAU and ECA member States who are not yet members of AATPO to join the Association at the earliest opportunity

3. Calls on the Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to give all possible financial and technical support to AATPO and to carry out the studies requested by the eighth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Trade

4. Appeals to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Development Fund (EDF) to give all possible financial assistance and other support to AATPO